THE CALL LETTER

The Call Letter *is the official publication of KTSB-Student Radio at the University of Texas at Austin*

Volume 2 **November 1988** **No. 3**

~~POI DOG PONDERING~~

—— ktsb exclusive ——

Fourwaycross —— R&B Bash —— Look Inside!

THE CALL LETTER

Volume 2 November 1988 No. 3

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91.7 cable fm

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The *Call Letter* is published monthly by ktsb. The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily represent the views of the station.

The *Call Letter* always welcomes any submissions in the form of editorials, art, reviews and comments as long as they are accompanied by a name and phone number. If you are interested in interviewing bands, local or national, please contact Greg Headley at the ktsb office. You can also get in touch with the editor at the same number, 471-5106.

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THE LATEST PLAYLIST

1.	Poi Dog Pondering	*EP*	Texas Hotel
2.	New Bohemians	*Shooting Rubberbands*	Geffen
3.	Texas Instrument	*Sun Tunnels*	Rapid Cat
4.	Michelle Shocked	*Short Sharp Shocked*	Polygram
5.	Sugarcubes	*Life's Too Good*	Elektra
*	Folkways: A Vision	*Compilation*	CBS
5.	Bongwater	*Double Bummer*	Shimmy Disc
*	Joy Division	*Substance*	Factory
7.	Jane's Addiction	*Nothing's Schocking*	Warner Bros.
8.	Psychédelic Furs	*All of This & Nothing*	Columbia
*	Fishbone	*Truth & Soul*	Columbia
9.	Jad Fair & Kramer	*Roll Out The Barrel*	Shimmy Disc
*	Felt	*Pictorial Jackson*	Relativity
*	Timbuk 3	*Eden Alley*	I.R.S.
*	Wire	*A Bell Is A Cup*	Enigma
10.	Click Click	*Rorschach Testing*	Pias
*	Half A Chicken	*Bird Dog*	Rapid Cat
11.	Ballad Shambles	*E.P.*	Skyclad
*	Bad Mutha Goose	*Bad Mutha Goose*	Fable
*	Daylights	*King*	109
*	Patti Smith	*Dream Life*	Arista
*	Pere Ubu	*The Tenement Years*	Enigma
*	Sharkbait	*Sharkbait*	Gladys Pearce
12.	Tom Waits	*Big Time*	Island
*	Catheads	*Submarine*	Restlass
*	The Inbred	*Kissin' Cousins*	Toxic Shock
*	In Tua Nua	*The Long Acre*	Virgin
*	Public Enemy	*It Takes A Nation*	Def Jam
13.	Sly & Robbie	*Summit*	Ras
*	Yellowman	*Rides Again*	Ras
*	Weather Prophets	*Judges, Juries*	Relativity
*	Del Rubio Triplets	*3 Gals, 3 Guitars*	Cabazon
*	Die Kreuzen	*Century Days*	Taang!
*	Robert Cray	*Don't Be Afraid*	Polygram
*	Rapeman	*Budd*	Touch 'n Go
*	Momus	*Tender Pervert*	Creation
14.	Smiths	*Rank*	Sire
*	Joan Armatrading	*Shouting Stage*	A&M
*	Fred Lane	*Car Radio Jerome*	Shimmy Disc
*	Van Morrison	*Irish Heartbeat*	Polygram
*	Jack The Tab	*Compilation*	Castalia
*	Happy Flowers	*I Crush Bozo*	Homestead
15.	Glass Eye	*Bent By Nature*	Bar None
*	Randy Erwin	*Cowboy Rythym*	4 Dots
*	The Soul of TX Women	*Compilation*	Home Cooking
*	Fast & Bulbous	*Compilation*	SST
*	Area	*The Perfect Dream*	C'Est La Mort
*	Jimmy Dale Gilmore	*Fair & Square*	Hightone
*	Rigor Mortis	*RigorMortis*	Capitol
*	Beef Sisters	*Beef Sisters*	Stone Garden
16.	Iggy Pop	*Instinct*	A&M

The complete KTSB Playlist can be found at the station.

Audio Cable and You!

Like the weather, many people talk about KTSB, however, too many are stymied by the seemingly complex task of hooking up the FM "splitter" to their stereo systems in order to receive the wonders of KTSB programming.

If you are reading this issue of the *Call Letter* then there is a good chance that you know KTSB is one of the finest relief systems available to cure radio boredom. By looking at our programming schedule you can see we provide the only place on the Austin FM dial where you can regularly hear a variety of music totally unavailable elsewhere in Austin! So get with it.

Here's what you do. Go to Radio Shack, Wholesale Electronics, or even drop by the KTSB offices (in the old Varsity Cafeteria on the UT campus) and get a "splitter" kit for about $7.00. It consists of a little "Y" connector (which merely lets two wires be connected where there was only one before), two pieces of TV coaxial cable, and a little converter attachment which will allow you to plug the new wire into the back of your stereo system. (Yes, Virginia, the TV cable carries audio signals as well as video.) It is about as simple as plugging in a table lamp and an extension cord. You should not let a task this easy to perform deny your desire to hear new music.

Now there is one complication. Austin CableVision does not feel that this is a free service. So if you do decide to hook up your audio service, we urge you to call up Austin CableVision and let them know you have done so. They will then charge you an extra $2.00 per month on your cable bill. At less that 7 cents per day, this is a bargain in anyone's book.

Like the philosophers say, "Why not now?"

KTSB
would like to thank
the following for
sponsoring on-air programming
during the month of
October:

Austin Challenger
BeeBop Printing, Inc.
Nightmare on Fifth Street
Pleasant Valley Sportsplex
Thanks!

For information
on how your business
can underwrite
on the air
or for
The Call Letter
please contact Will Samuels
at the KTSB office, 471-5106.

There is a flurry of excitement within the Underwriting staff of KTSB, as they are hard at work in securing underwriting for both the* Call Letter *as well as for on-air programming. In their first week alone, the u/w staff received over $250 in underwriting. Not too shabby, eh? If you are interested in joining this elite corps of KTSB marketing consultants, and are hard-working, energetic and dedicated, call Will Samuels at 471-5106. He'll be more than happy to hear from you.

Mr. Science
"He knows more than you do."

Ken McKenzie's PD Buzz

Wellee-wellee, oh my droogs. . .it seems lots of new folks are turning on and tuning in 91.7 cable FM since the first week of school. Many listeners come to know Austin's Alternative college station by flipping their TV dials over to Channel 33 and letting the half-assed boobtoob speaker expand their musical horizons. The liddle lites on the phone unit in the control room blink more often now than they ever have (when our DJs call for requests at "471-KTSB"). . .thanks to the "unknown engineering professor" for giving up his old office number on the UT Bell system. We must be doing something right.

Interesting how quickly our information programming personnel are learning the work that goes into preparing the news, the sports, the calendars, the public service announcements, and the talk shows—whether live or pre-recorded. It requires a type of commitment that goes beyond choosing music and words to present that music. Those of us who started during the Task Force days to plan musical alternatives to Austin's ridiculously limited airfare seem to have overlooked how the pre-written elements of KTSB's programming could also qualify as "alternative." Yours truly will hereby claim the primary responsibility. Now that I've french fried my nis-nis in public. . .on with the show.

Two of the features that definitely qualify as alternative airspace are the goofy **"KTSB Midnight News"**, heard Mondays thru Fridays at the switching hour and the **"Sinema Twins Hollywood Spotlight,"** which now airs Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. Check 'em or chuck 'em—but remember, groovy guys and gals—a great music mix is never far away. Heyyy! (Say that last line real fast and with lots of hype. You'll get an idea of what our DJs *don't* sound like!)

The **New Sampler** program on Saturday mornings at 11:00 am now as Thaddeus Evert as its host since John Dennet was snatched right out of Austin before I could get him on the air. Waterloo Records will be helping out with provisions.

Here's your chance to improve your leadership skills by getting involved in:

•changing the life of an Austin youth
•promoting condom education and awareness
•delving into the intricacies of Texas government
•exploring Soviet culture and lifestyles

We want you!
The University YMCA
contact us at
Texas Union 268
P.O. Box 7338
Austin,TX 78713
or call
Jaime Hadley at 837-3508

If you haven't yet figured out the method behind our **Feature Album** madness, it's this: Music Director Laura Martz presents a brand new release every Wednesday night at 10:00 pm and ex-Music Director Rob Forman collaborates with her on the selection of a "classic" alternative rock album every Thursday night, same time.

A couple of changes with our KTSB Nightly News Hour I should mention. The **6:00 pm Newscast** is now followed by a sportscast before the Campus/Community/Club Calendars. Then we have a couple of Environmental News features next to the Pacifica News at 6:30 pm. (What the hell, "Campus Voice Encounter" was usually trite anyway. . .)

I hope you're enjoying the on-air results of our new production studio. It makes learning about the wide variety of KTSB programs easier for the listener when you can hear promotional spots. Not to mention opportunities for ticket/album/t-shirt giveaways. (*Hint, hint.*)

Finally, we are accepting submissions for on-air editorials now. If you've got an opinion on nearly any issue, you qualify. Mail your script (or whatever you want to call it) to KTSB, c/o Programming Director, or drop it off at the Texas Student Publications office or the station. Include your name and phone number so I can call you to come in and record your voiced opinion for KTSB. The maximum length it can run is two minutes. Hope to hear from you soon. It will be a lovely horrowshow.

NOVEMBER FEATURE ALBUMS

Wednesdays at 10:00 pm
Laura Martz will entice you with a new release at this time. Stay tuned throughout Wednesday to here what the new album will be. Or better yet, tune in at 10:00 pm!

Thursdays at 10:00 pm
Hosted by Rob Forman

November 3
Coil
Scatology

November 10
Buzzcocks
Singles, Going Steady

November 17
Big Boys
Lullabies Help the Brain Grow

November 24
Game Theory
Real Nightmare

December 1

It Came from Muddy Monday...

by Scot Kleinman

Once upon a time, in mid-October, I received a phone call . . .

Scot, I think it's your dad.
"Hello?"
"Scot, guess where you're going tomorrow night?" (It wasn't my dad.)
"I don't know, where?" (It was by blues partner, Keith.)
"To the R&B Bash."

Bitchin', I'm there.

A Look at the Rythym and Blues Benefit

Opening Act: Is that *the* Nick Lowe? Yes, it is. The audience wanted to hear some old hits. Why do you want to hear old stuff, he asks. It's new stuff. New is good. New is now. New is where it's at. A pretty hip cat. When he broke a string, he kept playing with only five. His cool guitar with five strings was better than the square one with six strings that they were trying to give him. He finished by asking, "What's So Funny About Peace, Love and Understanding?" What indeed. They'll be laughing all the way to the election booths, though. **•Sam Moore•** Wow! I missed him with Dave, but boy he's still hot! The crowd was on the floor on the first notes of his opening song, the Eddie Floyd classic, "Knock on Wood." Second song was sung with Bonnie Raitt; he's having fun, exclaims she's a whole lot prettier than Dave ever was. He decides to get his "jive in first" with a version of "Wrap It Up!" There was no stopping this man. Where has he been? Can I go back to those good ol' Atlantic days now? Man, just something else. Yow! The man does Otis. He is out of control; sweating buckets. "You ain't seen nothing yet," he exclaims. He ends with "Soul Man." People are pushing their way to the front of the stage to shake his hand. Incredible! **•Bonnie Raitt•** Followed a real tough act. Brought out Sarah Brown on bass. Bonnie played accoustic and boy did she play! The audience recognized "Finest Loving Man" from her first longplay. A great treat indeed. **•Chuck Jackson•** Man! Not much to say, but I want his jacket! This man has not changed since the '60s; not his voice (included with the likes of Otis and Ben E. King), his soul, nor his satin purple jumpsuit, nor that wild fluorescent, sequined, (I don't know was it was) it was a cool jacket. Never quite got the attention he deserved at the time, but has a number of hits, including a few he played like "I Don't Want To Cry", his first hit. He did not want to leave the stage. He said goodbye. He sang a song. He said goodbye again. He sang Ben E. King's "Stand By Me." He left the stage. He came back. He said goodbye. He sang "Amen." He said goodbye. He left the stage. He came back. He sang "Amen." He said goodbye. He left the stage. **•Ruth Brown•** Now I know why they used to call Atlantic, "The House that Ruth built." Not only can she belt out the blues in that good ol' Aretha tradition, but she was the main motivator behind this cause: giving these fantastic artists the royalties they deserve. The record companies had gone too far. Some of these people hadn't seen royalty checks for over 20 years. Yet their albums were being sold and re-released. Ruth helped change that. She had help and later introduced her accomplice, Howell Begle. I never thought I'd actually clap for a lawyer, but this duo did good. And they're continuing to protect the rights of these artists who laid the foundation for much of the music we hear today. Singing, "Mama, He Treats Your Daughter Mean," Ruth sang with a passion and the house was rockin'. **•The Clovers•** One of the first R&B ensembles to whom all subsequent acts owe quite a lot. The original members were united for the first time in over 20 years. One of them, Bill Harris, however, recently became very ill and couldn't make it. He sent his son, however, and what a thrill that must have been! "Devil or Angel", "Love Potion #9", these guys had it down. And they were having a good time. Ain't that what it's all about? Here's to the Clovers. **•Those 'birds•** Well, once they finished that Toyota song (you know, the one they got from some commercial or something), these boys really rocked. They played hits; they played the blues; they played. Little brother (!) Stevie joined in on "Tuff Enuff" and looked like he was having a grand ol' time. Bonnie came out, too. Electric this time. Rockin' and Rollin' they were . **•Stevie Ray Vaughn•** I stopped taking notes. I mostly stood there with my mouth wide open, unbelieving. Hot. This man was boiling! There wasn't a solid ice cube in the house. Jimmie sat in for the song, "Love Struck." It quickly turned into a jam. A jam! We're not talking any little jam here, we're talking big-time, all-out, nothing held back, Rock & Roll Blues Jam! With the 'birds drummer to boot. Does anybody have a right to play this well? There is too much talent in this family. No wonder some of us have so much trouble. When Stevie got serious for a moment, and told us of his recent trouble with drugs and his current recovery, everyone listened. Everyone *cared*, man! Any boy who can play like that and get a message across is untouchable! Five-time best Blues guitarist—no doubt! Stevie Ray Vaughn is back and he's bad!

I couldn't catch all these acts in their hey-day. I'm just glad they're still around, playing as they do. The Blues are eternal. They will be around long after the Dodge Darts and the cockroaches! Tune in to ***Muddy Mondays, KTSB's Blues show*** *on Mondays 2:00-4:00 pm. Away!*

Poi Dog Pondering

Originally from Honolulu, Poi Dog Pondering first visited Austin in February 1987 on a trip across "the mainland," as Hawaiians call it. They began their journey as travelers simply playing on the streets here and there to raise money for food. UT students became accustomed to seeing them play on the Drag in the afternoon as they hung out in Austin for about a month before departing for the East Coast, apparently leaving behind only a pleasant memory.

As it turned out, however, the band, in a somewhat different incarnation, returned to Austin last winter to record their first EP after securing a deal with Texas Hotel Records, an independent label in California. The record came out in May (locally, anyway), and an impressive performance at the New Music Seminar in July helped net the band a tour which included several dates opening for major-label artist and college radio chart champion, Camper Van Beethoven.

Just before leaving on that tour, lead singer, guitarist and chief songwriter Frank Orrall, the Progenitor of Poi, took time out to talk to the *Call Letter* at the Cedar Door bar about the band's history and adventures. Also joining in was Bruce Hughes, who hooked up with the band in Austin about a year ago and has been their bassist every since. Things got off to a rolling start as Bruce fumbled a cigarette and watched it fall between the wooden slats of the bar's patio deck.

Bruce: Aw, f***!. . .Sorry about that!

Call Letter: Nice first words of the evening. . .

Bruce: Oh, fine, that's going to be on the interview! I just dropped my cigarette down below—I'll see you guys later.

CL: All right, so, when did you first come to the states from Hawaii?

Frank: In '86.

CL: And that was with how many people at the time?

Frank: That was with nine people.

CL: How many of the people that originally started are actually still in the band now?

Frank: Of the people that were in the original Poi Dog, Ted and me. Actually, Poi Dog formed in Hawaii, did two shows there, and only two of those Poi Dogs from that bad could actually come on the trip. Everyone else had to stay and go to school or go to work or whatever. Those two were me and Sean (Coffey, the band's original drummer). And then we got all these people , so when we left Hawaii there were nine of us. . .and then people started dropping off one by one. So the nine that left Hawaii had been whittled down to five by the time we got to Austin; people either went back to Hawaii or moved to San Francisco or whatever.

CL: This is when y'all come through Austin the first time, in February of '87?

Frank: Yeah. We were just Sean, Kalea, Jean-Francois, Abra and me. And then in Austin, we met up with Jared, Ted, Alan and Cliff, who were all people from back in Hawaii that had played in this street band named Food. This street band, we met like once a week in Waikiki and played. There was about twenty people in Food, but every week, there'd be anywhere from one to eight people that would actually show up. But everyone who's been a Poi Dog that's from Hawaii is from that band. . .we weren't called Poi Dog when we left. We weren't trying to be a band; it was just everyone taking off to do this street sort of travelling "tour" across the States. We didn't know how long it was going to last; all we decided was that we were just going to go.

CL: But you all had played a couple of gigs in Hawaii at that time.

Frank: We had two gigs, and they were completely fundraisers for airline tickets for the trip out. so anyway, by the time we got to Austin, those four other people had joined us, so we became nine again, and were playing noontime concerts. After about a month we continued travelling up to New York, and up there—well, actually, by the time we got to Austin, everyone was pretty much burned out on the whole thing. Everyone was pretty tired of not knowing where we were going to sleep at night and all. So it ended quickly after we left Austin. Just one month up to New York and everybody went different ways. But I still wanted to keep the band going. . . and that's when I met Bruce, when I came back through Austin from New York, in August of '87. I had met Bruce when we actually started playing together. Abra was with me at that time. I wanted to move to San

Francisco to work with a drummer who lived out there, so Abra and I went up there. Bruce come up a couple of months later, once we were all settled in, and we got down to some rehearsing out there, originally trying to start getting everything going. By that time, all the paperwork had been done with Texas Hotel and we were going to do this record with them. . .But things didn't work out with the drummer in San Francisco, so we decided to move back down here. We had a record looming, it was ready to go, and yet we still had no band. It was just me and Abra and Bruce.

CL: So you were thinking it was just going to be just the two or three of you all doing this record.

Bruce: Well, we knew there was going to be additional members, but we weren't worried about the actual recording process of it. We knew that if need be, we'd go ahead and do the record ourselves, because we knew exactly what needed to be done.

Frank: And we knew loads of musicians here in Austin that would fill out the spaces that we wanted to. . .And Sean was into coming back and playing. He had his fling going back to school and everything, and he decided that he still wanted to play music, so he came back and met us here in Austin and was doing the record.

CL: So he did play drums on the record.

Frank: Yeah; he played on three cuts and I played on the other three. And we brought on Adam Sultan on guitar; he's from Austin. And Ted Cho, who was living in New York, moved back down here. . .And we brought in Dave (Crawford, the band's trumpet player) just to play on the record, and he ended up just fitting right in, after doing a couple of shows.

Bruce: But then Sean had to leave again, a health problem came up; this was on our trip back out west (this past summer). We went out to scour and play the universities between here and San Francisco, and we tried to raise enought money to go to Hawaii, and actually almost did. We had to borrow some money, but we went out there.

Frank: So when we came back, we were looking for a drummer, and we found Rock Savage (who also drums for Miracle Room), and we were working with him for a while.

Bruce: Which turned out wonderfully.

Frank: Yeah, that worked out real well. But he's moving to New York with Miracle Room now.

CL: Bruce, you've been in a lot of bands here; how long have you been playing in bands around Austin?

Bruce: Since I was about 13. I'm 27 now.

CL: What other bands did you play in before?

Bruce: So many bands that I can't remember the names now. I played with Skank for about three years. I did some other things that were half-hearted on the side. . .I was sick of doing a lot of things and feeling not resolved. I wasn't giving myself, or my whole self, or a major part of myself; I was, like, doing out eighths of myself across the city, and it was really unrequited.

CL: Were you looking for one particular band that was really something you wanted to work with?

Bruce: No, at the time actually, I wasn't. I didn't think that was something I wanted to do. But is just happened to come together in a a situation where I met Frank and really liked him and felt like perhaps we could spur each other on to do bigger and better things, and luckily it's turned out that way. It's been a lot of fun. Of course, it also was a situation I saw I could take full advantage of and use to my own means. I'd never been to San Francisco before, or the northern West coast, and I wanted to. And so I did. And it was wonderful. I'd never been to New York before or the East Coast, and I had never been to Hawaii before either.

Frank: Poi as an implement of travel.

Bruce: But all these things are actually just side bonuses of the main situation, which is playing and continuing to play, without which I would go totally stark raving mad.

CL: Do you all support yourselves just with the band these days, or do you have other things going on?

Frank: No at all; everybody else has their own "other thing." Right now it's paying for gas and strings and food; that's about what it's paying for.

CL: Do you think that's something that's going to change anytime soon?

Frank: It's going up. Every month it's getting just a little better. We're getting more gigs; we're being able to get a little more money; everything's looking a little better, and the prospects of it getting even better are showing up.

Bruce: We're working with the people higher and higher in the echelon of the way the system works. We're breaking through and still retaining our own sense of control of what we're going to do. We're dealing right now through several venues—we're dealing with big agents and trying to decide what's best for the situation, to help us help other people help us. We're not looking for a big major record deal so that somebody could distribute and promote the record so we don't have to do anything, because we've already done a lot of the dirty work and want to continue to do it. Because that's part of the fun of it—you know, travelling around and just getting to know people. We've made a lot of friends across the country, and we want to continue to do that. Because without that, we lose a major source of inspiration.

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Interview by Peter Blackstock

from Los Angeles FOUR WAY

With three albums, an EP and their first American tour under their belt Fourwaycross have come from out of the shadows and firmly proved themselves as a band to be reckoned with; capable of moving from hauntingly ethereal pieces to total-rock-out riffing without even breaking stride.

The band originally assembled in Los Angeles in 1984 with Courtney Davies, guitar and flute; Steve Gerdes, bass; Biff Sanders, drums and percussion; and Tom Dolan, guitar and vocals. They immediately recorded an 8-song cassette of some magnificence. From the whispered pleas of "When Will You," to the despair of "Strictly Morphine," it was an excellent effort, recorded and distributed entirely by the band through their own Motiv Communications.

In early 1985 they began work on a follow-up. The late 1985 result was *Fill the Sky*, an album of amazing diversity and raw emotion. In accord with others of the time, the album was a statement to be taken as a whole. From the bitter "Losing," to the humanistic "USA" and the industrial din of "Trench," the album was definitely a statement of great emotion and independence and showed Fourwaycross to be very serious about their music and their ideas.

It was also a success for the band's own Motiv Communications label. It was Motiv's first, and cornerstone, album and gave the band hope for Motiv's success. The band said: "We started Motiv to put out our music but it was also a way to keep control over everything. Semi-successfully we felt we could do it." They control every aspect of each album from the production and recording, which Biff handles, to the cover artwork and inserts which Steve does.

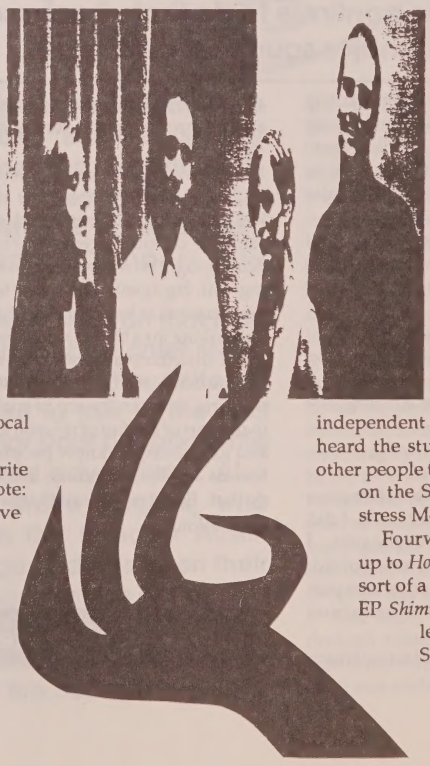
However, after the release of *Fill the Sky*, front-man Tom Dolan left the band, leaving a baritone void. In steps Beth Thompson, who had added some keyboard, guitar and vocal work to *Fill the Sky*.

They soon began to regroup and write new material. On songwriting they note: "Basically we just jam as a group and everybody kind of concentrates on their own part. So the songs are really written by the whole band."

With the personnel change the band says they wanted to change gears and make the next album sound different, "We wanted it to be a lot more personal, to bring you into the living room." The result was 1986's *Home*, a much more introspective and subtle album than *Fill the Sky* but with just as much character and feeling. It touched more on personal views than on panoramic ones, something the band says reflected their mood at the time.

On *Home* they ran into another small dilemma that they had also encountered on *Fill the Sky*. Each album has an "industrial" piece that covers a good deal of one side of each album. "Trench" from *Fill the Sky* comes in at only about five minutes but "Metal from Daisies" from *Home* takes up more than one-third of side two. The subtle beauty of the piece is something the band felt necessitated it being that long. Of the pieces they say: "We do it on all the records but when you've got songs they come first. We would like to do something with several free-form extended instrumental pieces, but we've just had other songs we wanted to put on the albums instead." They have tried to incorporate these pieces into their live set. They've performed "Trench" live many times and did "Metal from Daisies" live on a Pittsburgh radio station on their recent tour.

After *Home*, Motiv was starting to really move and Fourwaycross decided they wanted to diversify the label. *Fill the Sky* had included the first issue of *Alternator*, a loose arrangement of art and fiction put together by Tom Dolan. All four agree: "Motiv had this idea of not just music but artwork. Like *Alternator* and also doing soundtracks for artist performance pieces and films." As well they wanted to diversify the sound of the label. Several bands had been recording at the Motiv studios and Fourwaycross decided they wanted to issue an album on Motiv by the Blissed Out Fatalists. About the same time some friends had been shopping a tape of their band, Steaming Coils, to some independent labels. Fourwaycross says: "We had heard the stuff and we felt like we really wanted other people to hear it. We decided to take a chance on the Steaming Coils because we wanted to stress Motiv as a label."



Fourwaycross also began work on a follow-up to *Home*. They wanted something that was sort of a Fourwaycross sampler. The resulting EP *Shimmer* presents what they call, "A four-legged step in four different directions." Stating: "It was important to us to have four very different songs. We don't want to limit ourselves. We like to

CROSS talks with Greg Headley

keep it interesting." It's exemplified in the anthemic riffing of "Interstate" that bleeds straight into the entrancing buzz of "Peregrine." *Shimmer* is indeed an excellent sampling of the band's diversity of ideas.

The same year, 1987, also saw the return of Tom Dolan to Motiv. His Doubting Thomas album, *Another Way of Knowing*, presented a softer and much different arrangement of songs than those of Fourwaycross but no less intense or emotional. The album also included the second issue of *Alternator*, now album-sized and with much better layout.

And now the future looks good for Fourwaycross. Having completed a successful tour they are preparing a new album for the spring and another tour. Since the release of *Shimmer* and the other Motiv bands, Motiv has been picked up by more distributors than ever. The first Fourwaycross cassette was also released as an album through the Nate Starkman & Son label and Fundamental Music.

As for the band: "We've got an agent, which is how we got the tour, and we've got a guy shopping us to other labels. We don't want to kill Motiv but Fourwaycross needs to move into a larger tax bracket."

They say that Motiv has been receiving tapes from all over the country and even resumes from people that want to work for the label. Fourwaycross have received letters from Czechoslovakia and had an article written about them in a Greek magazine; all even though their material is available only as imports in Europe.

If the Fourwaycross and Motiv effort so far are any indication, things for both will only get better.

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Some people have had the temerity to question the "Programming Policies" of KTSB. Our answer to that is, "Hey, there are now two-full time stations in the U.S. which play nothing but Elvis 24 hours a day. How wrong could we be?"

In that light we would like to let fans of local music and supporters of up and coming bands know about **KTSB's Demo Show** on Fridays from 7:00-9:00 pm. (Since we haven't settled on the perfect name for the show yet, we sometimes call it the "Local Show". What imagination!) For two hours we exclusively present music that have been produced locally, primarily on local labels, or music that is fresh out of studios around town. What makes the KTSB program different from other radio station's "local" shows is our emphasis on playing demo tapes. Now before you say "...Ehhhh, local demo tapes? I think I have to do the laundry that night..." realize that we receive such a massive pile of tapes from Austin's endless supply of aspiring musicians that some of the stuff we get is, as they say, "really good." And accordingly, we only put the stuff that is great on the air for your ears. Our serious suggestion is that you do not miss this show, especially if you are interested in keeping up with who the hot new bands and performers around town are likely to be.

While listening to the **Hoi Polloi** demo in the office, people swore they heard several things varying from Maria Muldaw to Janis Joplin. The band has a country influence which is easily identified in "Me and Kesey", along with a folksy-blues cut, which is my favorite song on this 4-song cassette. The other memorable song, "Out of Focus" has a bizarre piano that lends a carnival atmosphere to the song. Not to bad.

Another cassette added to the KTSB playlist is **Salem Tree.** They are a new "Austin sounding" band on the scene. Listen to the tape! **Stick People** also have a new 4-song cassette out, featuring 3 new songs and one re-release. This cassette has an acappella feel despite lush instrumentation. They're a fun local band who you should try to catch the next time they play.

Be sure to catch the show on Fridays and pick up the *Call Letter* next month for a more indepth look at the latest in Austin's new talent.

Like the death of Mark Twain, the demise of **Club Cairo** has been much exaggerated. With the number of rumors floating around the club and music land, it was hard to tell what was true and what was a product of overheated imagination. The known facts are that Brad First's new music haven was out of time on its temporary liquor, beer and wine licenses and the TABC was waggling the padlock. The club has been closed for a few weeks, but the doors will open again full time in November. As always, Club Cairo will offer a wide spectrum of quality bands along with great roadshows. KTSB welcomes the return of one of Austin's best live music venues and encourages you to get down and check the new lineup.

If you are a musician and would like a shot at getting your recording on the Demo/Local Show, please send your tape (along with a contact name and phone number) to:

Alexis Arnold
KTSB-Austin's Alternative
P.O. Box D
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Cocteau Twins **by Kyle James**
Blue Bell Knoll
(4.A.D./Capitol)

Soaring. Or gliding. These are the sensations that pervade from the opening notes of *Blue Bell Knoll* until the last chords slowly die. The architects of "the most beautiful arrangements in contemporary music" have returned, and gravity has been rendered powerless. For where vocalist Elizabeth Frasier, bassist Simon Raymonde and guitarist Robin Guthrie are anchored is a mystery, but is surely is no where near the ground.

It has been a two year wait for the next Cocteau Twins LP after the outstanding 1986 release *Victorialand*. And the trio from Scotland has garnered another veritable tour de force. Yet the ever evolving Twins refuse to fall into a mold. Unlike the elusive "progressions" of *Victorialand*, the group has taken a backward glance at the previous *Treasure* and written a collection of six individual songs, 2.5 to 3.5 minutes long, each with a definite beginning and end, and even sequencer runs through some. Have the Twins fallen prey to pop's ever menacing conventions?! No way! For as soon as a pop base is touched, and hovered above for a second, the listener is flung back out into the heavens and engulfed once again in the ether.

Liz Frasier's voice is undeniably one of the most unique, beautiful and haunting ever recorded. On this record she has more than ever denied intelligibility and espoused tonality and melody. Her voice is the dominating instrument, tumbling down steps to low hums, then, in her spritely fashion, springing back up, jumping octaves to dazzling highs. She never ceases to amaze and her voice never ceases to improve. And of the other instrumentation, Robin swears they just play ". . .what sounds nice." Quite an understatement, for with the sonorous guitar, complex overdubs and the many subtel touches sprinkled in, celestially inspired would seem a more proper description.

"Blue Bell Knoll," the title track, starts out the album proclaiming "We're back!" in their own way as the sparse guitar and synth create a sonic background against which Liz weaves her medieval aural tapestry, before they let out all the stops at the end proving the Cocteau Twins can rock! "Athol-Brose," a French nursury rhyme, explodes upon us with Liz's voice moving along the undercurrent while she also swims above, her voice diving and sufacing effortlessly. The single and video produced from the album, "Carolyn's Fingers", is inimitable as they combine rock inspired bass and percussion lines with crying guitars and vocals to produce a work defying description. "The Itchy Glowbo Blow" (I dare anyone to say that three times quickly!) takes me to a subterranean cave, lurking in the murky water with fantastic structures before bursting out in the cavernous hollows, refusing to be trapped. And "Suckling the Mender" finds me in a museum, the anticipation between, and then coming upon a piece of art that takes you breath away.

That's the thing about the Cocteau Twins, each song takes on a different meaning with each listener. Each song waits to receive meaning. Their evanescent works suggest potential and express emotion rather than expound on a certain point. The song titles are certainly no hinderance for free association being chosen more for their mellifluous value rather than for their demonstrative one.

If there are any descendants from the muses, Elizabeth Frasier surely must be one. She along with Robin and Simon have created ten soundscapes, infinite expanses which engulf the listener and take him on a voyage unique to each. *Blue Bell Knoll* is a triumph.

The Sun and the Moon **by Judy Chen**
The Sun and the Moon
(Geffen)

Mark Burgess of the Chameleons UK is back. A year since the death of a former bandmate, Burgess has remerged to form the Sun and the Moon. This time around the lineup included a fellow Chameleon and a couple of guys from Music For Aborigines. Their debut effort (dedicated to the late Tony Fletcher) is for the most part Burgess's project, acutely personal and intensely reflective. In fact, he may even be a little embarrassed by his own openness; the liner note to the listener smacks of cynicism.

The album open with the driving guitars of "The Speed of Life," one of the most powerful cuts on the album. This song along captures the essence of Burgess's spirit. With lines like "The speed of life in this place/I just feel light years away" you can can almost feel him withdrawing from the realities of life, distancing himself with a temporary wall of sound, at the same time half-envying those who can cope "with the things I always sing about/so secure, so very sure." He wants to come back from orbit, but his heightened consciousness (or is it detachment?) predicts his return to the mundaness of everyday life.

The next couple of tracks continue along the same lines. "Death of Imagination" mourns exactly that in this age of reason. Burgess's reaction is quite clear—"I feel myself falling, endlessly falling/I spiral down, down, down." He's obviously not very happy with this world. "Peace In Our Time" is spliced with churning arpeggiated sequences which give an aggressive edge to this otherwise thoughtful number.

Side 2 kicks off with the emotionally charged "House On Fire." The song virtually tiptoes around the chorus, building up to a frenzied whirlwind of guitars. At last Burgess injects some life back into himself in a fit of passion. The staccato segments work extremely well with fluidity of the rest of the song.

"Price Of Grain" follows, somewhat generic, but anything that follows "House On Fire" is bound to sound dull.

(The plodding beat doesn't help either.)

Burgess's initial high doesn't last. He then takes you on a trip to "Limbo-Land," "where nothing in life seems exciting," a place where time is suspended, a vacuum, an emptiness. You get the feeling this guy is really in another dimension by now. The now standard chiming guitars impart an appropriate sense of weightlessness and despair to it. And "A Picture of England" has some hauntingly beautiful melodies despite the rather bleak scenario he paints of monotony in England.

The Sun and the Moon is a remarkably cohesive album stylistically and thematically. Prompted by his experience with the death of a close friend, Burgess takes you on a metaphysical journey to the hidden recesses of his mind. His soul searching yields some pretty depressing conclusions about life in general, but his delivery is sincerely honest, if his message not hopeful.

Skinny Puppy **by Tina Sederholm**
VIVIsect VI
(Capitol/Nettwerk)

"Industrial shock horror death metal synth noise theatrical performance art." What?! That was Propoganda's "mandatory label application" given to the three Canadian boys known as Skinny Puppy. Maybe, just maybe, this applied to *Bites*, the band's first album, which brought a darker beat to dance floors. With each progressive album the beat has become lighter, but the choice of Nivek Ogre is definitive. Skinny Puppy remains loyal to the Nettwerk sound with the release of their new album, *VIVIsect VI*.

With *VIVIsect VI*, Skinny Puppy seems to be moving toward a more dance conscious sound. There is a definite dance beat throughout the jamority of the album with few exceptions. The final song is mainly an industrial instrumental, without the driving beat. Another exception is "Harsh Stone White," the third song on the album, which is dark and haunting with a shadowed synth sequence.

The album begins with "Dogshit" which utilizes an industrial introduction and moves to a very definite beat. "VX Gas Attack," the next cut, serves well to hold up the beat of its precedent. The lyrics are politically conscious concerning chemical warfare, expecially the use of VX Nerve Gas. Next is the smooth break with "Harsh Stone White," which sounds influenced by cevin Key's involvement with the Tear Garden. Another socially conscious song appears, "Human Disease (S.K.U.M.M.)," which protests the FDA's permitting the presence of carcinogens in many foods. "Who's Laughing Now?" prepares us for the dance beat of "Testure," which concerns itself with animal rights and experimentation. This song relates to the title of the album, *VIVIsect VI*, which refers to dissecting animals for scientific research. "State Aid" serves to bring out Skinny Puppy's more industrial background with a strong repetitive beat throughout. Then, "Hospital Waste" brings us to the end with an industrial instrumental called "Fritter (Stella's House)."

VIVIsect VI exhibits Skinny Puppy's move to a more dance-oriented sound. Also, their political awareness seems to have heightened and found much expression on this album. The SP sound is still hard and driving without Nevik Ogre's voice. Cevin Key's collaboration with Edward Caspell (Legendary Pink Dots) and the Tear Garden has not drastically changed the sound SP has defined for itself. Overall the album is well constructed, with each song serving its purpose.

We have moved through the maze of the Mind: The Perpetual Intercourse and learned to Cleanse, Fold and Minipulate, but what do we do with *VIVIsect VI*? Well, if you like the direction Skinny Puppy have been taking, then stay with it.

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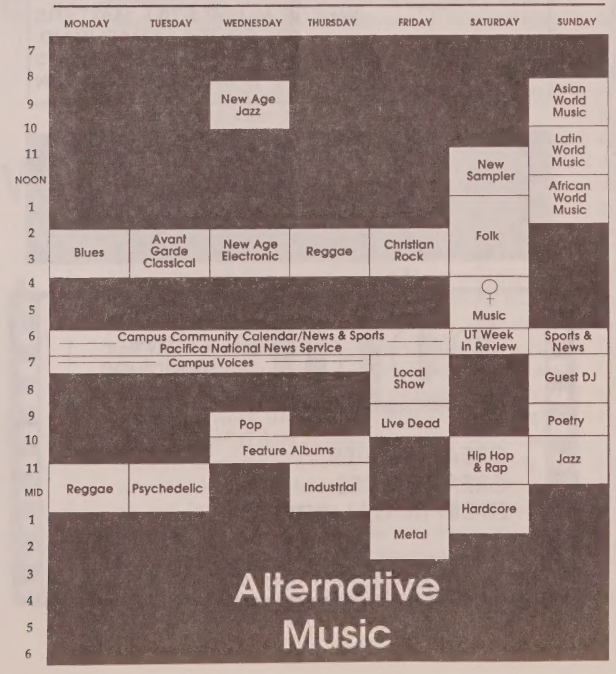

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